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The City Centre as an Age-Friendly Shopping Environment: A Comparative Study of Older and Younger Consumers' Perceptions

The urban population ageing has major implications for city centres to cater for an increasing number of older consumers. To guide world cities on taking action in response to population ageing, the World Health Organization has addressed the universal features of the age-friendly city. Based on the WHO guideline, this study focuses on city centres as age-friendly shopping environments. The emphasis is on the perceptions of older consumers (focus-group participants aged 64–94) and compared them with those of younger consumers (qualitative-survey respondents aged 21–41). Using a qualitative content analysis, the study explores the content and meanings of the age-friendly city features in the context of shopping, and whether older consumers are different from younger consumers in their behaviour and perceptions. The findings show that although older and younger consumers use the shopping environment in dissimilar ways, they highlight the same characteristics in the city centre. This indicates that measures to develop the city centre friendlier to older consumers also benefit their younger counterparts, but for different reasons. It is necessary to understand this disparity in order to develop a city-centre shopping environment that is friendly for different ages.

Keywords: age-friendly, city centre, older consumer, perception; shopping, younger consumer

Introduction

Population ageing poses a challenge for Western societies to cater for the increasing number of older consumers. In the EU region, the old-age dependency ratio (64+ people vs the 15–64-year-olds) has been estimated to rise to 40% during the 2020s (Eurostat Database). This demographic trend has major implications for cities, given that in the EU, almost 75% of consumers live in urban areas (European Union 2016). More specifically, population ageing should be taken into account in the city centres because they are important shopping environments for older consumers (Bromley and Thomas 2002; Wrigley and Lambiri 2015).

Along with the challenge of adapting to the changes in demographics, several intra-urban centres have faced pressure to remain vital shopping environments (e.g., Wrigley and Lambiri 2015; Parker et al. 2017). Studies on older consumers have reported that inner city decline has created difficulties for senior citizens taking care of their shopping (Bromley and Thomas 2002; Kohijoki 2011; Temelová and Dvoráková 2012). Although urban development projects have aimed at revitalizing the High Streets, older consumers have usually been remained outsiders because the emphasis has been on younger consumers (Buffel, Phillipson, and Scharf 2012; Kohijoki and Marjanen 2013). The concept of an age-friendly-city, initiated by the World Health Organization (WHO 2007; 2018), has raised awareness of the impacts of population ageing on urban environments (Buffel, Phillipson, and Scharf 2012; Fitzgerald and Caro 2014). It has emphasized that the most effective approach to responding to population ageing is developing cities to become more age-friendly. The aim is to adapt services and physical and social environments to be accessible to citizens of all ages with diverse needs and capacities. The fundamental aim is to support older citizens to age actively and healthily, because this contributes to independence in living and taking care of daily chores (WHO 2007; 2018; Sokolec 2016). Although the WHO-led projects have focused on older citizens, age-friendliness does not refer to the ageing of a specific age group. As active/healthy ageing is considered a lifelong process, an age-friendly city centre should not just be ‘old-age-friendly’ but ‘friendly for all ages’ (WHO 2007; Buffel, Phillipson, and Scharf 2012).

With an emphasis on older consumers, the current study explores the age-friendliness of city centres in the context of shopping. As a daily activity outside the home, shopping is considered a vital means for older consumers to stay active and maintain their well-being (Hovbrandt et al. 2007; Kohijoki 2011). The shopping behaviour of older consumers and their perceptions of the shopping environment have received considerable attention in the grocery shopping context (e.g., Wilson, Alexander, and Lumbers, 2004; Meneely, Strugnell, and

Burns 2009; Kohijoki 2011; Teller, Gittenberger, and Schnedlitz 2013; Lesakova 2016) but corresponding studies on city centres, multi-purpose shopping environments, are few in number (cf., Kohijoki and Koistinen 2018). Using a focus-group research method, the current study explores the perceptions of older consumers (64–94 years old) of the city centre as an age-friendly shopping environment and compares their perceptions with those collected through a qualitative survey among younger consumers (21–41 years old). As the framework of the qualitative content analysis, the study utilizes the typology of the universal features that the WHO (2007) has identified to contribute to the age-friendly city. The study explores what kinds of content and meanings these age-friendly city features have and whether older consumers differ from younger consumers concerning their city-centre shopping behaviour and perceptions of the shopping environment. The study offers new perspectives on retailing and urban planning in order to satisfy the needs and wants of an increasingly ageing society by recognizing the characteristics of a shopping environment that are relevant in developing the city centres to become friendlier for different ages.

The Features of the Age-Friendly City

The concept of the age-friendly city refers to an urban environment in which citizens are treated equally, regardless of their age. Citizens are enabled to engage in the different activities of the city life and access both the public and private services as well as the physical and social environments (WHO 2007). The age-friendliness of the urban environment is closely related to the concept of active/healthy ageing, which is seen as a process that enhances wellbeing and quality of life as people age (WHO 2002; 2018). The age-friendly environment supports and maintains the ability of ageing citizens to meet their basic needs, to be mobile, to build and maintain social relationships, and to contribute to society, amongst other things (WHO 2018).

To encourage cities around the world to become more age-friendly, WHO (2007) has published a guide for age-friendly cities based on focus groups of 60+ people in 33 countries. The guide consists of eight core features of age-friendly cities that cover the policies, services and structures related to the city's physical and social environments. These somewhat overlapping and interacting features include elements which were found to be universally relevant for older citizens (see Appendix 1; WHO 2007). Three of the features are key elements of the physical environment. *Outdoor spaces and building* refers to both the built and natural environment. It includes elements related to the location and accessibility of buildings and services, convenience and safety to move around, and the ambience and aesthetics of the environment (e.g., beauty and cleanliness). The *transportation* refers mostly to public transport services because according to the WHO (2007), driving is not an essential transportation option for older citizens. *Housing* includes elements of the housing structure, design, and ageing in place in terms of the location of essential services to the home.

Five other features reflect aspects of the social environment, but the physical features also affects some of them (WHO 2007). *Social participation* refers to engagement in different activities in city life. These include recreation, socialization, and cultural and spiritual activities. In addition to the offerings of activities, the ability to participate depends on receiving information about the services and having access to transportation. *Respect and social inclusion* includes elements related to behaviour and attitudes towards older people and the adaptation of products and services to older people's needs and preferences. It also includes aspects of community and economic inclusion. The experience of inclusion is closely linked to the level of engagement in city activities. *Civic participation and employment* refers to the contribution to the community through paid employment or voluntary work. *Communication and information* refers to the capability (incl. technical know-how) to stay connected with society and to receive timely and relevant information for managing personal

matters and meeting personal needs. *Community support and health services* includes the availability and accessibility of social services. Given the aim of the WHO, it refers mostly to health-care services, but it also includes help with shopping.

In this study, the WHO's typology is applied in the city-centre shopping environment. Several studies have emphasized the role of the physical features in the ability of older consumers to take care of their errands. Ageing-related studies have highlighted the meaning of the home and independent living to older citizens (Wiles et al. 2011; Lux and Sunega 2014; Sokolec 2016). However, physical obstacles in the outdoor environment may decrease the independency to engage in activities outside the home (e.g., Hovbrandt et al. 2007). In retailing studies, the emphasis has been on the physical accessibility of the services (incl. location, transportation) as a fundamental aspect for older grocery shoppers, in particular (e.g., Wilson, Alexander, and Lumbers 2004; Kohijoki 2011; Teller, Gittenberger, and Schnedlitz 2013).

The importance of social features has also been particularly highlighted for those old-age-pensioners who seek new activities to fill the social vacuum created by retirement (Wiles et al. 2011; Wallin 2019). As the WHO typology covers several aspects of city life, some social features apparently only have an indirect connection with shopping activity. However, all core features are explored as there is evidence from retailing that older consumers show a tendency towards multi-purpose shopping, and they look for social interaction in the stores. In addition to services offered, both the built environment and social aspects of shopping are found to be fundamental to older consumers (e.g., Meneely, Strugnell, and Burns 2009; Kohijoki 2011; Lesakova 2016). The age-friendliness of city centres should be evaluated from the shopping point of view in order to create urban environments that enable consumers to have an active, healthy and independent life while they age (Buffel, Phillipson, and Scharf 2012).

Methods

The study took place in the city of Turku (pop. 187,000) in southwest Finland. It focused on older and younger consumers who were familiar with shopping in the Turku city centre (Figure 1). To gain an understanding of the perceptions of older consumers of the city-centre shopping environment, four focus-group discussions with 5–6 participants (a total of 2 men and 20 women) were organized (Appendix 2). The method was convenient as it did not discriminate those who were incapable of filling in questionnaires or using information technology (Kitzinger 1995). The participants were 64–94-year-old pensioners (avg. age 75) who lived and did their shopping independently. The discussions (avg. length 2 hours) followed pre-formulated themes and they were recorded and transcribed in their entirety. After a short round of introductions, the participants described their typical city-shopping trip, how they perceived the city centre as a shopping environment, and how they were currently catered for. In addition to the current state of affairs, proposals for improvements were discussed. After a free discussion, a brief questionnaire (font size larger than normal) concerning background information on demographic characteristics and shopping behaviour (e.g. visit frequency and mode of travel to alternative shopping destinations) was completed.

[Figure 1. near here]

The perceptions of younger consumers were collected through a qualitative online survey (total of 6 men and 12 women, see Appendix 2). Besides background information, the survey included open-ended questions on the same themes as in the focus groups. The open-ended questions enabled the participants to freely express their experiences and perceptions without word limits (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018). The participants were 21–41-year-old university students (avg. age 27). They formed an appropriate group for comparison with the pensioners because, based on the socio-economic classifications, both groups belonged to the

socio-economic group of economically inactive consumers who have time to use for running errands (Official Statistics of Finland).

Both sets of data were analysed using qualitative content analysis complying with deductive logic (Mayring 2004; Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018). After thorough readings of the data, the comments were organized and summaries of the content and meanings were composed according to the typology of the age-friendly city features (WHO 2007). The individual elements presented in Appendix 1 were used as a guideline to analyse the consumer data. In this paper, summaries of the feature-related perceptions, divided into physical and social environments, are presented and the age groups compared.

Findings

The content and meanings of the features of age-friendly cities in the context of shopping are summarized in Table 1. For each core feature, it presents the main themes revealed in both sets of data and specifies the perceptions or behaviour of older and younger consumers relating to these overarching themes. The viewpoints of the age groups were different in most of the themes. In this section, relevant background information and the findings on physical features are reported in the order they emerged in the shopping trip descriptions of the older consumers, whereas the social features follow the order of the WHO typology (Appendix 1).

[Table 1. near here]

Physical Environment

Housing

The older participants started by describing their shopping trips from home. About half of them lived in an apartment in or near the city centre, whereas one third lived in a terraced or detached house in the suburbs (Appendix 2). A convenient location of the home with respect to the city-centre services was emphasized. They did not have major issues with accessing the

services, but they were worried about the future. They hoped to stay healthy and active enough to be able to live in their present home for as long as possible (i.e. ageing in place):

It's important... that we can go where we want by ourselves... this kind of activity is decreasing; it's highly valuable to maintain this option. (Woman 82)

The younger participants lived in the vicinity of the city centre, mainly temporarily in student apartments, and thus they considered the services easily accessible. By a convenient location, they meant quick shopping on the way home from other activities:

I make the purchases in the centre while going to the university or home. (Man 23)

Transportation

The city centre was visited regularly as two-thirds of both groups did city shopping at least once a week. They highlighted convenience and functionality to easily access the market square, which they considered the heart of the commercial city centre (see Figure 1). Several modes of travel were used, bus and private car being the most common choices among older consumers. Younger consumers usually walked or took a bus. As there were very few cycle paths or cycle parks in the core centre, those who preferred cycling had to park a few blocks away from the market square.

Although two-thirds of the older participants and one-third of the younger participants had access to a private car, the bus was considered a more convenient and functional method for travelling to the centre. For the older consumers, the reasons were the low-priced tickets and frequent daytime schedules with direct access to the market square. Both age groups found it convenient that the bus terminals were located around the market square. In the open square, the buses were also easy to find. Although the car owners perceived it to be easy to drive to the centre, they usually left their car at home because parking was inconvenient around the market square. For older drivers, inconvenience meant that parking times were too

short for shopping and, for younger drivers, parking places were hard to find. Both groups suggested improvements in parking facilities.

I seldom go there as... the [parking] times are so short. (Woman 64)

If you go to Turku [city centre], you need more time [for shopping] as first you need to find a place for the car. (Woman 41)

The bus ride, however, did not avoid criticism. The older consumers considered carrying purchases on the bus to be inconvenient. When it was necessary to make heavy purchases, some drove to out-of-town stores, but carless seniors had to rely on taxis to get home from the centre. The bus services were considered inaccessible particularly among mobility-restricted seniors, for whom driving competence was the only means of coping with city shopping independently. Younger consumers complained that on weekends in particular, the bus services to the city centre were inadequate.

For customers with a rollator, it's difficult to travel by bus... and the buses depart so quickly that many people fall down. (Woman 67)

I have noticed that I don't travel by bus to the centre on Sundays due the infrequent schedule. (Woman 24)

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The layout of the city centre was considered to be compact, with a variety of services located a few blocks from the market square. For the older consumers, compactness meant that the distances were short enough for them to walk easily from shop to shop. For the younger consumers, compactness meant, above all, being able to handle their purchases time-efficiently.

As it's so small and compact, it's easy to run errands and to go from one place to another. (Woman 81)

The city centre is a good shopping environment because all services are close to each other and shopping is therefore quick and easy. (Woman 23)

The older consumers emphasized that the city centre is a barrier-free walking environment and the brick-and-mortar stores are easy to access. However, referring to cobbled-street pedestrian areas, they wished for smooth and non-slip surfacing to decrease the risk of falling. The younger consumers also found cobblestones unpleasant, but they did not highlight the issues of accessibility in outdoor spaces.

Both groups agreed that the city centre is a secure shopping environment regarding crime. However, they were concerned about traffic. The fear of being run over by a car when crossing the road reduced the feeling of security among the older consumers. For their part, the younger consumers felt that cycling among traffic was dangerous.

Cars go through a red light... but if you are careful and make sure that it's a green light, and then running you manage [to cross the roads]. (Woman 80)

There should be more cycle paths... it would increase safety. (Man 36)

Despite the perceived safety risk, the older consumers disagreed with the younger that cars should be banned from the centre. As noted regarding transportation, the older consumers wished they would be able to drive to the centre by themselves. The younger consumers reinforced their argument by mentioning the unpleasant exhaust fumes.

Regarding the building architecture, both groups paid attention to similar characteristics. In the market square surroundings, the buildings built during the past 60 years were seen as boring whereas the neoclassical-style theatre and church represented beauty in the architecture. The riverfront, two blocks from the market square (see Figure 1), was considered a harmonious environment with many beautifully restored buildings, elegant examples of their era of architecture.

Not on the riverfront, but elsewhere, there's no consistent [architectural] line. (Man 73)

The riverfront is wonderful, but the market square surroundings and shopping street seem somehow grey. (Woman 23)

The riverfront promenade and the city parks were important places for both groups. It was typical of the older consumers to pop into the parks while shopping. They emphasized the importance of preserving these green areas, because they are vital for those who are unable to walk in the forests. For the younger consumers, green areas are important places to spend time with their friends. Thus, they hoped for more lawn-surfaced pedestrian areas. Like the older participants, they also desired more seating. For the younger consumers, parks and public seating areas provided places to hang out with their friends without obligation to buy anything. For the older consumers, seating facilitated their shopping. As they spend time shopping, they need places to rest their feet. They frequented cafés and restaurants, but they also called for benches in the market square, pedestrian (shopping) street, and inside the department stores they patronized.

There should be benches... I think our mobility is worsening all the time. (Woman 68)

More benches... in the city centre. (Man 23)

Lastly, the characteristic that both groups had paid attention to in the outdoor environment was the rubbish on the streets, which they considered to decrease the attraction. More rubbish bins were suggested, but above all, changes in attitudes:

There is dirt everywhere... but no one can do anything unless people change their attitude. (Woman 79)

The cleanliness could be better, but it requires that residents and visitors change their attitudes. (Man 21)

Social Environment

Social Participation

Social engagement was important for both age groups when visiting the city centre. There was a consensus that there were enough events and activities available. The older participants

actively participated in various citizens' clubs, but the younger participants did not show a similar engagement. Both groups enjoyed the fairs, music and other cultural events, but they wished for more free admissions to allow everyone to participate. In addition, the older consumers regretted that musicals and theatre plays are performed in the evening. Unlike the younger consumers, they avoided the city centre during the dark time of the day due to feelings of insecurity. It was typical that the older consumers engaged in recreational, cultural and spiritual activities on their shopping trip in the city centre. They enjoyed frequenting cafés, restaurants, the library and exhibitions, in particular. For them, city shopping was a vital means of preventing loneliness. Some of them had regular lunches with their friends, for example, but, more often, they went city shopping alone to see other people or find someone to talk with. The market square and market hall were pleasant places to keep up these spontaneous relations. On the other hand, the younger consumers did not go shopping in search of company. They made separate trips to meet their friends in bars and restaurants, usually in the evenings, and at student events. Frequenting restaurants becomes costly, so city parks and the riverbank offered free sites for hanging around and having a picnic with friends.

Every morning I think about what I need to buy... I eat out, meet people and friends in the market square, pop up clothing stores, buy food... I go to the city centre to look around and spend time. (Woman 81)

The events that make me visit the city centre are usually for students. (Man 21)

Respect and Social Inclusion

Neither the older nor the younger participants had experienced age-based discrimination by other citizens. The older consumers were pleased that help was available when needed, even from strangers. Because they were looking for social contact, they preferred to shop in the market square and hall where the service was more personal than in the grocery stores.

Although they could acquire all necessary products and services from the city centre, they

expressed a wish for the fashion retailers to improve their ranges targeted at older adults. They added that they did not frequent out-of-town shopping centres because they considered them to be targeted at younger shoppers. Regarding community inclusion, the older participants were pleased that the researchers and the city authorities were interested in their perceptions.

The younger consumers were also satisfied with the offerings of the city centre, but sometimes they directed their shopping to out-of-town. They specified that sports-gear selection was much broader in off-centre shopping centres. Although the city-centre food stores offered efficient shopping, lower prices made them occasionally shop at the off-centre hypermarkets. Regarding economic inclusion, although both students and pensioners are entitled to special discounts, the younger participants, contrary to the older, repeatedly highlighted the importance of low prices or free entrances.

There [in the market square/hall] you can have such a social contact that you don't have in large markets, I need that. (Woman 68)

I buy food from Citymarket [a hypermarket] because there is a better selection and lower prices than in the city centre. (Woman 23)

Civic Participation and Employment

This feature is closely related to social participation. All the older participants were pensioners, and many of them were actively involved in volunteering. They considered it important that the events and clubs where they were volunteering were located in the city centre for ease of access and to make it convenient to shop on the same trip. The younger participants were full-time students and some of them worked part-time. Although some of them were active operators in student activities, volunteering in clubs and so on was not highlighted or connected with shopping activity.

Communication and Information

Most of the older participants had appropriate devices and the knowhow to use information technology, acquire information, and run their errands through e-channels. They used health and bank e-services rather competently and regularly bought travel and theatre tickets.

However, they did regret that many service providers, banks in particular, have reduced the number of physical service counters. Apart from tickets and books, the older consumers seldom shopped online. They considered e-shopping to be a socially isolating activity, and even spontaneous meetings in the centre were vital for staying connected with society. The younger participants were experienced with technology, frequently shopping online to get products unavailable elsewhere, to make shopping easy, and to find competitive prices. The products they usually bought online were tickets, books, electronics and clothes. Although the younger consumers were accustomed to e-shopping, their perceptions indicated webrooming behaviour. They used the web to find information and to make price comparisons, but the brick-and-mortar stores were still their main shopping channel.

I don't e-buy as it's a nice experience when you shop in a [physical] store. (Woman 66)

In the e-purchases, I compare prices and don't make hurried decisions. (Woman 23)

Community Support and Health Services

The older participants regularly used health and wellness services (e.g., hairdressing, manicures) in the city centre. On the same trip, they did their shopping, frequented cafés and so on. This kind of multipurpose activity was seen to increase physical and mental wellbeing. They highly appreciated that click-and-collect/delivery services have increased, but they still wanted to do their shopping without home help for as long as possible. They considered physical shopping to be a means of getting exercise. The younger participants did not mention health services, probably due to the off-centre location of the student health-care services. Regarding wellness services, they were pleased that there were many hairdressing/barber

services at affordable prices in the centre. In addition, gyms were regular destinations for many, but also these services were usually used on a separate trip from shopping. Regarding home-delivery services, the younger consumers considered them to alleviate their busy schedules.

It is a pastime [to shop] in the centre, and those pampering places are there, I use those [services] once a month... also the doctor... and usually afternoon coffee with my friend.

(Woman 67)

There are at least a million cheap barbers in the centre, and they offer discounts for students. (Man 23)

Discussion and Conclusions

The study explored the age-friendliness of the city-centre shopping environment from the perspective of older consumers, but also compared their perceptions to those of younger consumers in order to gain understanding of how to develop city centres to become friendly for different ages. The typology of age-friendly city features (WHO 2007) proved to be applicable in the context of shopping and, given the purpose of this study, it was exhaustive. The physical features were rich in perceptions and all the social features had connections to shopping activity. New core features were not revealed, but the exiting features acquired new content and meanings. The study highlighted the fact that shopping activity plays a significant role in the age-friendly city centre. The findings confirmed that that shopping is a fundamental activity for maintaining physical and mental well-being (cf., Hovbrandt et al. 2007).

Consistent with prior studies (e.g., Meneely, Strugnell, and Burns 2009; Lesakova 2016), the physical features of the environment as well as the social aspects of shopping were found to be important to older consumers. It turned out that the older city shoppers highlighted the same characteristics in the city centre as their younger counterparts. However, the age groups differed in their shopping behaviour and used the same city spaces in

dissimilar ways and partly at different times of the day. The older consumers were more service-oriented and more frequently connected shopping with social networking whereas the younger consumers were more price sensitive and tended to do their main shopping on a separate trip from other activities. Because the age groups viewed the age-friendly city features through different lenses, the feature-related perceptions of the older consumers diverged from those of the younger (Table 1). In many respects, however, the suggestions for improvements were similar, which indicates that the same measures for developing the city centre do benefit consumers of different ages, but for different reasons. This disparity is important for the city-centre retailers and other actors to understand in order to satisfy the needs and wants of consumers of all ages. In addition, as the older city shoppers proved to have unique perceptions and be a significant customer segment for city centres, they should not be treated as outsiders in development projects (cf., Buffel, Phillipson, and Scarf 2012). By understanding older city shoppers, societies can also be better prepared for the ageing of younger generations.

The study offered a new perspective on responding to the challenges that consumer ageing poses on western cities. Although the findings were limited to a medium-sized city, and some of them were location-specific, the fundamental challenges of ageing are similar irrespective of city type (cf. WHO 2007; Lux and Sunega 2014). However, a comparative study between several cities is recommended. For example, contrary to the findings of the WHO (2007), maintaining driving competence was here found to be vital to the older participants. Thus, evidence from other cities would reveal whether this finding was location-specific and/or shopping-related.

The data sets in the study were comparable despite the different methods of collection. Using focus groups instead of a survey proved to be successful with the older participants because writing turned out to be challenging for many. However, the anonymity of a survey

allowed the younger consumers to openly express their concerns about money, for example, whereas the focus-group participants did not share their thoughts on this topic. Talking about money may be a taboo for older generations, but the findings supported the evidence that older consumers are relatively affluent and value service(s) over price (e.g., Kohijoki and Marjanen 2013). Finally, middle-aged consumers, and those with children in particular, were excluded from this study. Thus, in order to form a more comprehensive understanding of city shoppers studies with a focus on several age groups or stages of life is recommended. Using ‘walk-along’ interviews on shoppers’ interaction with the city space in which they move would target the actions on the right places and at the right time of the day.

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Appendix 1. The age-friendly city features (WHO 2007).

P H Y S I C A L E N V I R O N M E N T		
O U T D O O R S P A C E S A N D B U I L D I N G S		
Environment Green spaces and walkways Outdoor seating Pavements	Roads Traffic Cycle paths Safety	Services Buildings Public toilets
T R A N S P O R T A T I O N		
Affordability Reliability and frequency Travel destinations Age-friendly vehicles Specialized services	Priority seating Transport drivers Safety and comfort Transport stops and stations Information	Community transport Taxis Roads Driving competence Parking
H O U S I N G		
Affordability Essential services Design	Modifications Maintenance Ageing in place	Community integration Housing options Living environment
S O C I A L E N V I R O N M E N T		
S O C I A L P A R T I C I P A T I O N		
Accessibility of events and activities Affordability Range of events and activities Facilities and settings	Promotion and awareness of activities Addressing isolation Fostering community integration	
R E S P E C T A N D S O C I A L I N C L U S I O N		
Respectful and inclusive services Public images of ageing Intergenerational and family interactions	Public education Community inclusion Economic inclusion	
C I V I C P A R T I C I P A T I O N A N D E M P L O Y M E N T		
Volunteering options Employment options Training Accessibility	Civic participation Valued contributions Entrepreneurship Pay	
C O M M U N I C A T I O N A N D I N F O R M A T I O N		
Information offer Oral communication Printed information	Plain language Automated communication and equipment Computers and the Internet	
C O M M U N I T Y S U P P O R T A N D H E A L T H S E R V I C E S		
Service accessibility Offer of services	Voluntary support Emergency planning and care	

Appendix 2. Characteristics of older and younger participants.

Focus-group discussions of older participants, autumn 2016

Participants' relationship to each other	Venue of the session	Gender	Year of birth	Household size	In/off-centre resident	House type (based on address)	Access to car
Friends who meet regularly	Private apartment; Kaarina (next town to Turku)	Woman	1952	one	off-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1950	two	off-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1949	one	off-centre	detached	yes
		Woman	1948	two	in-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1948	one	off-centre	apartment	no
Members of a senior citizens' club	Club premises; Turku	Woman	1949	two	off-centre	detached	yes
		Woman	1946	one	in-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1944	two	off-centre	terraced	yes
		Woman	1938	one	off-centre	apartment	no
		Woman	1937	one	in-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1935	one	in-centre	apartment	no
Members of a citizens' club	University premises, Turku	Woman	1951	two	off-centre	detached	yes
		Woman	1945	two	off-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1944	two	off-centre	terraced	yes
		Man	1944	two	off-centre	terraced	yes
		Woman	1936	two	off-centre	apartment	yes
Residents of a housing corporation	Housing-corporation premises, Turku	Man	1943	two	in-centre	apartment	yes
		Woman	1935	one	in-centre	apartment	no
		Woman	1934	one	in-centre	apartment	no
		Woman	1932	one	in-centre	apartment	no
		Woman	1923	one	in-centre	apartment	no
		Woman	1922	one	in-centre	apartment	no

Online survey of younger participants, spring 2018

Gender	Year of birth	Household size	In/off-centre resident	House type (based on residential area/post code)	Access to car
Woman	1994	one	off-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1995	two	off-centre	apartment	yes
Woman	1995	two	in-centre	apartment	yes
Man	1992	one	off-centre	apartment	no
Man	1994	one	in-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1977	four	off-centre	n/a	yes
Woman	1995	two	in-centre	n/a	yes
Man	1995	one	in-centre	n/a	no
Man	1982	one	off-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1993	one	off-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1994	two	off-centre	apartment	no
Man	1997	one	off-centre	apartment	yes
Woman	1987	one	off-centre	n/a	no
Man	1996	one	off-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1994	two	off-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1995	four	in-centre	apartment	no
Woman	1995	one	in-centre	apartment	no

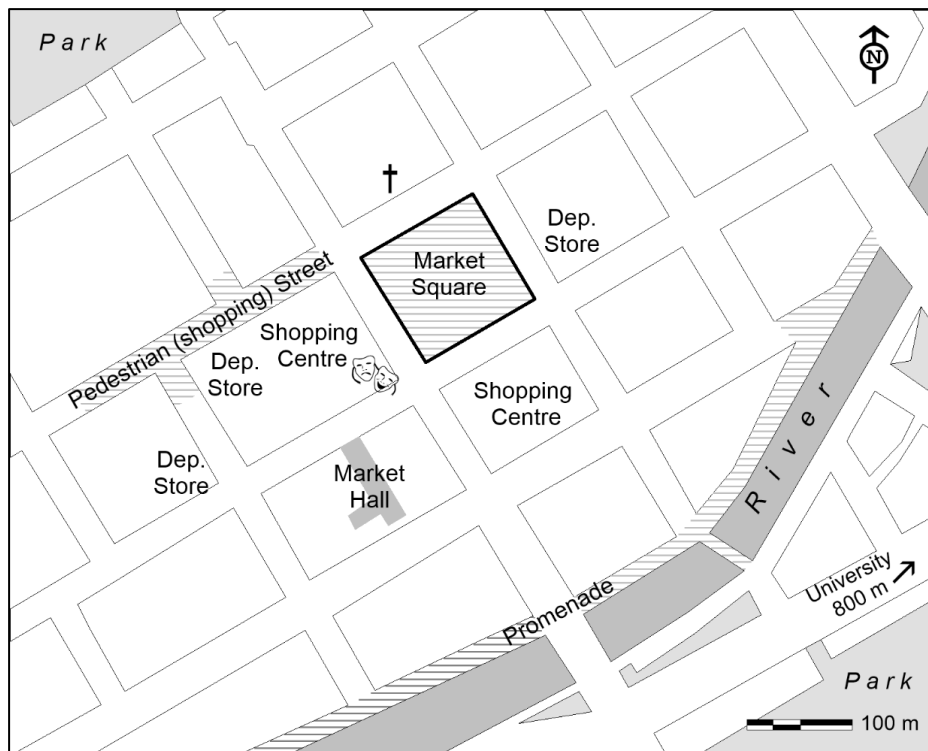


Figure 1. Turku city-centre shopping environment with places of interest.

Table 1. The age-friendly city features from the viewpoint of older and younger city shoppers.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
OLDER CONSUMERS	YOUNGER CONSUMERS
OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS	
<i>Compactness</i>	
easy to walk from shop to shop	time-efficient shopping
<i>Convenience & safety to move around</i>	
smooth & non-slippery surfacing	
risk of being run over by car, no support for car-bans	risk of cycling among cars, support car-bans
<i>Building architecture</i>	
harmonious streetscape represents beauty	
<i>City parks</i>	
only access to nature for many, visited on the shopping trip	free spaces for hanging around with friends
<i>Outdoor seating</i>	
facilitate shopping	places for hanging around with friends
<i>Cleanliness</i>	
increase attractiveness, demand changes in attitudes	
TRANSPORTATION	
<i>Convenient & functional</i>	
easy access to the heart of the city centre	
by bus, private car	by foot, bus
<i>Car-based convenience</i>	
parking inconvenience: short parking times driving competence vital to cope with shopping	parking inconvenience: shortage of parking places
HOUSING	
<i>Convenient location with respect to services</i>	
living independence	shopping efficiency
SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	
OLDER CONSUMER	YOUNGER CONSUMERS
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION	
<i>Social engagement</i>	
shopping for finding social contacts connect shopping with other activities time of a day: daytime	social engagement, mostly on a separate trip from shopping time of a day: afternoon and evenings
RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	
<i>Customer service & product offerings</i>	
Service-seeking attitude directs shopping at city centre disrespect as fashion shoppers	price-consciousness direct shopping also at other shopping environments
CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT	
<i>Volunteering</i>	
connect shopping with volunteering	mostly on a separate trip from shopping
COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION	
<i>IT & e-shopping</i>	
moderate users e-shopping socially isolating activity	proficient users inclined to webrooming
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES	
<i>Health care & wellbeing</i>	
connect shopping and health maintenance shopping a means to exercise	use wellness services regularly, mostly on a separate trip from shopping
<i>Click-and-collect/deliver services</i>	
physical shopping enhance wellbeing	occasional relief to busy lifestyle